

Return to Custody Report 2010-2013



This document contains key adult correctional data points to assist management and staff in making evidence-based decisions.

Dr. Ryan Thornell, Associate Commissioner
Maine Department of Corrections
25 Tyson Drive
State House Station 111
Augusta Maine 04333-0111

James Tanner, Data & CQI Coordinator
Maine Department of Corrections
25 Tyson Drive
State House Station 111
Augusta, Maine 04333-0111

August, 2017



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Return to Custody Introduction & Definition	4
Return to Custody Data Collection	4
Return to Custody Rate by Release Year – Initial Findings	6
Return to Custody by Type of Release.....	7
Probation Release	7
Straight Release	8
Return to Custody by Gender	9
Return to Custody by Release Custody Level	10
Close Custody Release	10
Medium Custody Release	11
Minimum & Community Custody Release	12
Return to Custody by Age at Release.....	13
Total Returns by Age.....	14
Conclusion	15



Executive Summary

Recidivism is a standard criminal justice term used in various ways to explain the rate at which released prisoners return to the prison system. The ability to effectively measure recidivism rates in each state allows state correctional departments to look for ways to keep repeat offenders out of the prison system thus decreasing overall state correctional budgets and increasing public safety. The inherent problem with analyzing recidivism on a national and state level is the fact that differences in definitions and survey methods exist.

Two well-known national reports on recidivism outline these differences; The Pew Charitable Trust (2011) and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (2002, 2014). The most recent study produced by BJS reported that 49.7% of the released prisoners in their observed timeline returned to prison within three years. The Pew Charitable Trust report tracked more states than the BJS study reported about 40% of released prisoners returned to prison within three years.

In this report The Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) establishes a methodology for calculating "recidivism," including using the phrase "Return to Custody" rather than recidivism. By establishing this methodology for measuring Return to Custody, MDOC can begin to report, analyze, discuss, and design policies to address this problem.

The following pages illustrate and explain the rate at which prisoners released in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 returned to MDOC facility within three years of release. Overall, the three-year return to custody rate increased from 2010 to 2013, increasing from 24.7% to 30.2%. This increase, along with other key findings, is detailed in this report.



Return to Custody Introduction & Definition

In January 2017, MDOC began designing a process to analyze the rate at which released prisoners return to the Department's custody. Prior to 2017, the Department contracted with external providers to measure variations of recidivism on specific populations of offenders. While useful, the process of using an outside vendor to monitor this left the Department limited ability to analyze other factors leading to return to custody.

Establishing a process to monitor and analyze return to custody that is created by the Department is essential in making key policy and practice decisions.

The new process builds off of 18 months of improved data collection, data extraction, and data analysis that allows the Department to analyze baseline return to custody rates. In subsequent years, this process will allow the Department to begin measuring the success of its rehabilitative efforts as they relate to offenders' return to custody, including measurement of the effectiveness of specific programs, treatments, and initiatives. This information will be updated, analyzed and reported annually.

MDOC defines "Return to Custody" as the *release of a prisoner from an MDOC facility followed by a subsequent return of a released prisoner to an MDOC facility, with or without a new criminal conviction*

Return to Custody Data Collection

The data for this study was developed by the Department using our offender management database, known as CORIS. The data sample was a collection of inmate releases from January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2013. The sample also included a return to custody from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2016. Inmates released from 2010-2013 were tracked for a return to custody across three years post-release, through end of 2016.

The dataset captures two different release scenarios:

Probation Release = Facility to Probation

Straight Release = Facility to Society



Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Report

The dataset was configured and audited for integrity and deemed trustworthy. The data points collected and analyzed include:

Data Point	Definition
Type of Release	Probation or Straight Release
MDOC#	Maine's unique identification number for inmates
Gender	Male or Female
Release Date	Date of Release
Return Date	Date of Return to MDOC Facility
Location Released From	MDOC Facility prisoner released from
Location Released To	Identifies a probation office, or state released to
Custody Level Prior to Release	MDOC has four inmate levels of custody assignments; Close, Medium, Minimum and Community.
LSI Score Prior to Release	LSI Score (upon release) is a rating of a prisoner's criminogenic risk while under MDOC supervision
Release Controlling Offense	Most severe (greatest sentence length) offense the prisoner was serving when released
Return to Custody Controlling Offense	Most severe (greatest sentence length) offense the prisoner was sentenced for upon their return to MDOC custody
Return Month	Number of Months elapsed from when an inmate was released from an MDOC facility and when they returned to an MDOC facility.
Return to Custody Rate (RCR)	Rate at which released prisoners return to an MDOC facility

The bullets below explain what elements are not included in the Return to Custody dataset:

- Offenders on probation who entered a MDOC facility during the 2010-2013 time frame who were never previously incarcerated in a MDOC facility
- DOC releases to probation, who were released to society and then convicted of a new crime but served their sentence in a county jail
- MDOC Releases to Supervised Community Confinement Program (SCCP)
- MDOC Releases to Interstate Active Detainer (IAD), Federal Prison



Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Report

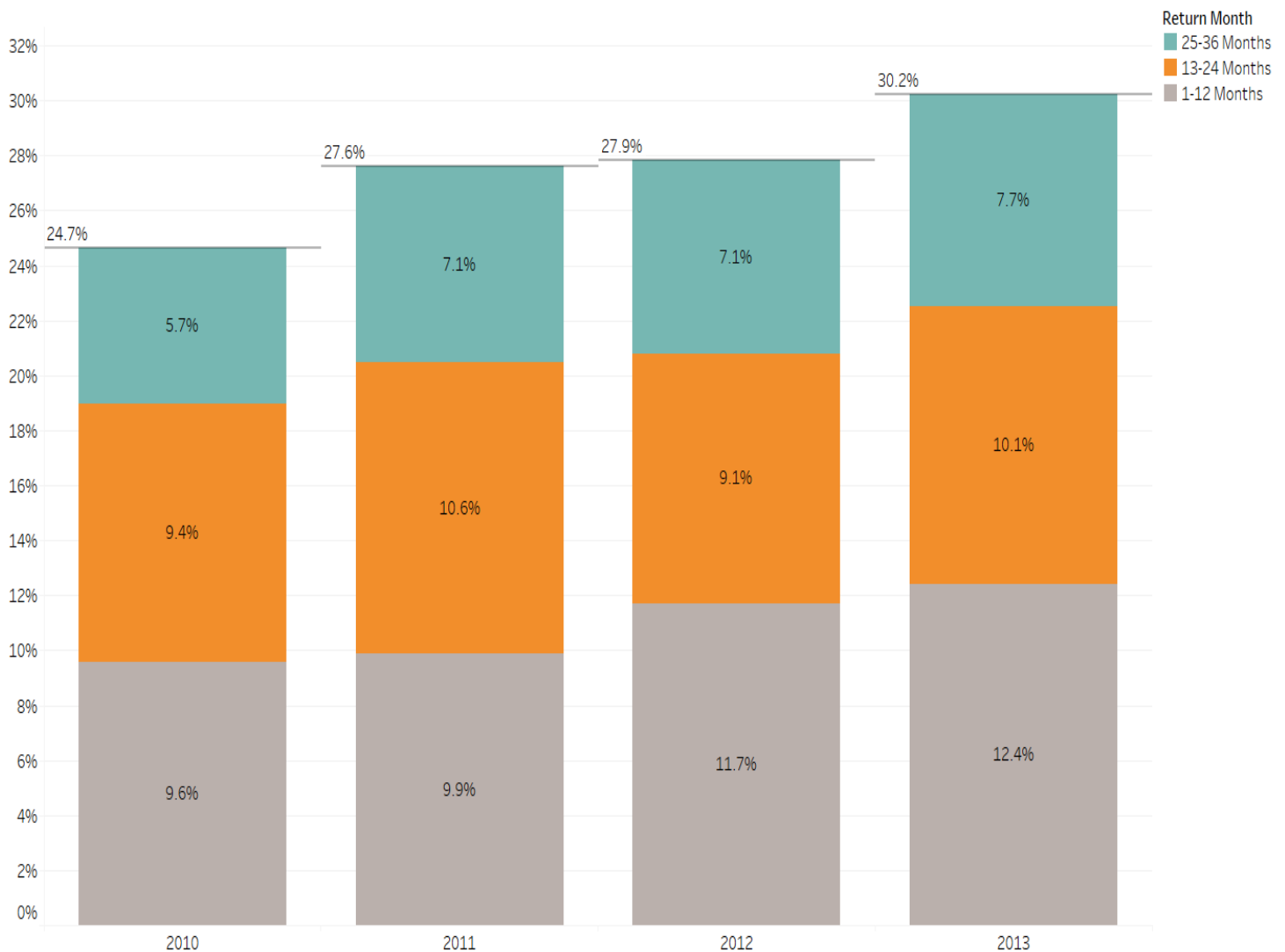
Return to Custody Rate by Release Year – Initial Findings

The chart below represents all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2013, grouped by Return Month and Release Year.

MDOC Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 24.7%
- 2011 Release Year– Three year RCR – 27.6%
- 2012 Release Year– Three year RCR – 27.9%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 30.2%
- Three year RCR Average – 27.6%

The highest rate of return occurred in the first 1-12 months from release. On average 11% (2010-2013) of those released returned to MDOC custody within 1-12 months.





Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Study

Return to Custody by Type of Release

Depending on the Release Type (Probation or Straight Release), the RCR changes and the next several charts depict the RCR for different release types. A Probation Release had a higher RCR than a Straight Release. On average (2010-2013), a Probation Release RCR was 33%, 12% higher when compared to the average Straight Release RCR in the same period (21%).

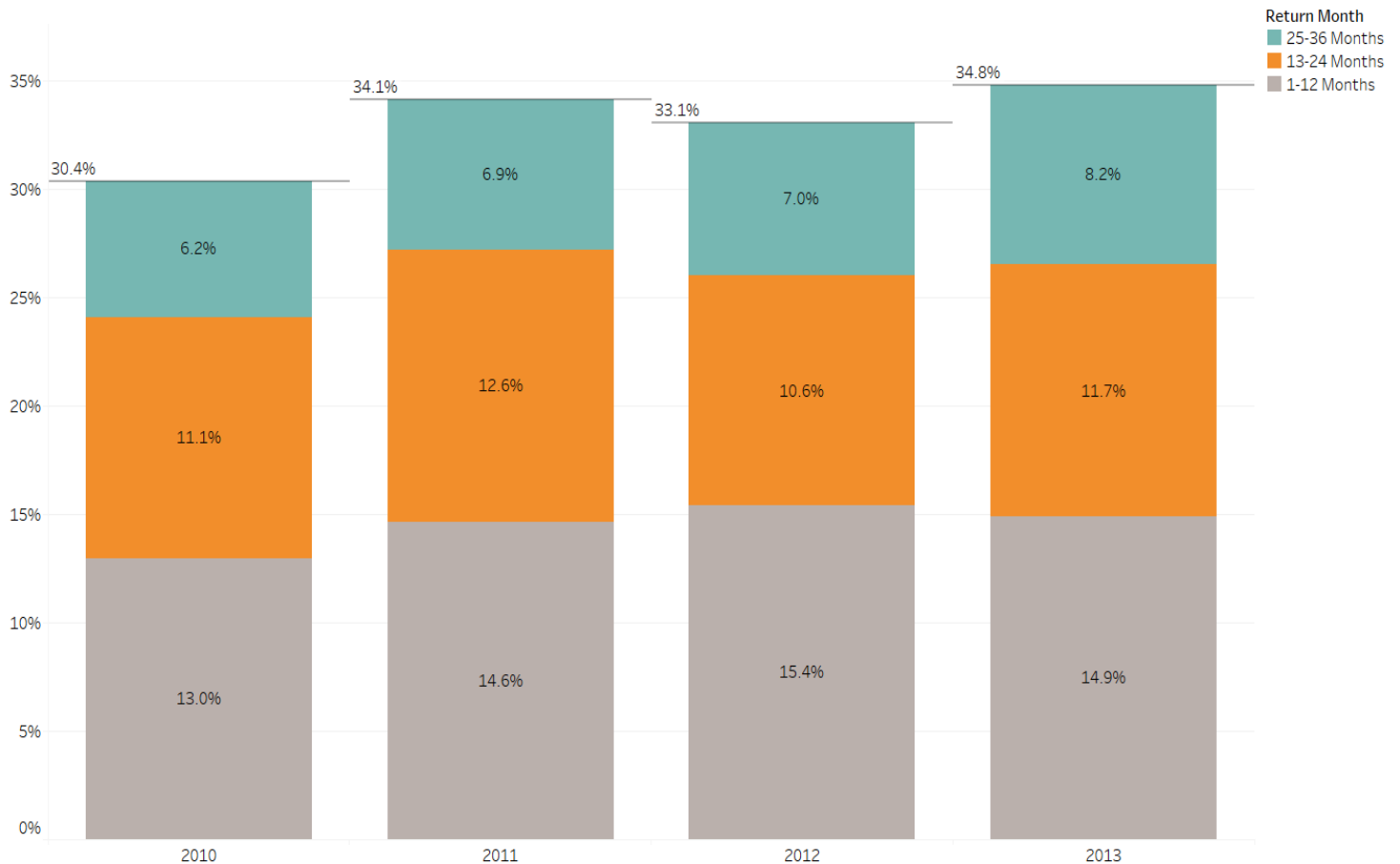
Probation Release

The chart below represents all probation releases from a MDOC facility between 2010 and 2013 grouped by Return Month and Release Year.

MDOC post release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 30.4%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 34.1%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 33.1%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 34.8%
- Three year RCR Average – 33.1%

The highest rate of return occurred within the first 12 Months from release. On average 14% (2010-2013) of those released returned to an MDOC facility within 1-12 months.





Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Report

Straight Release

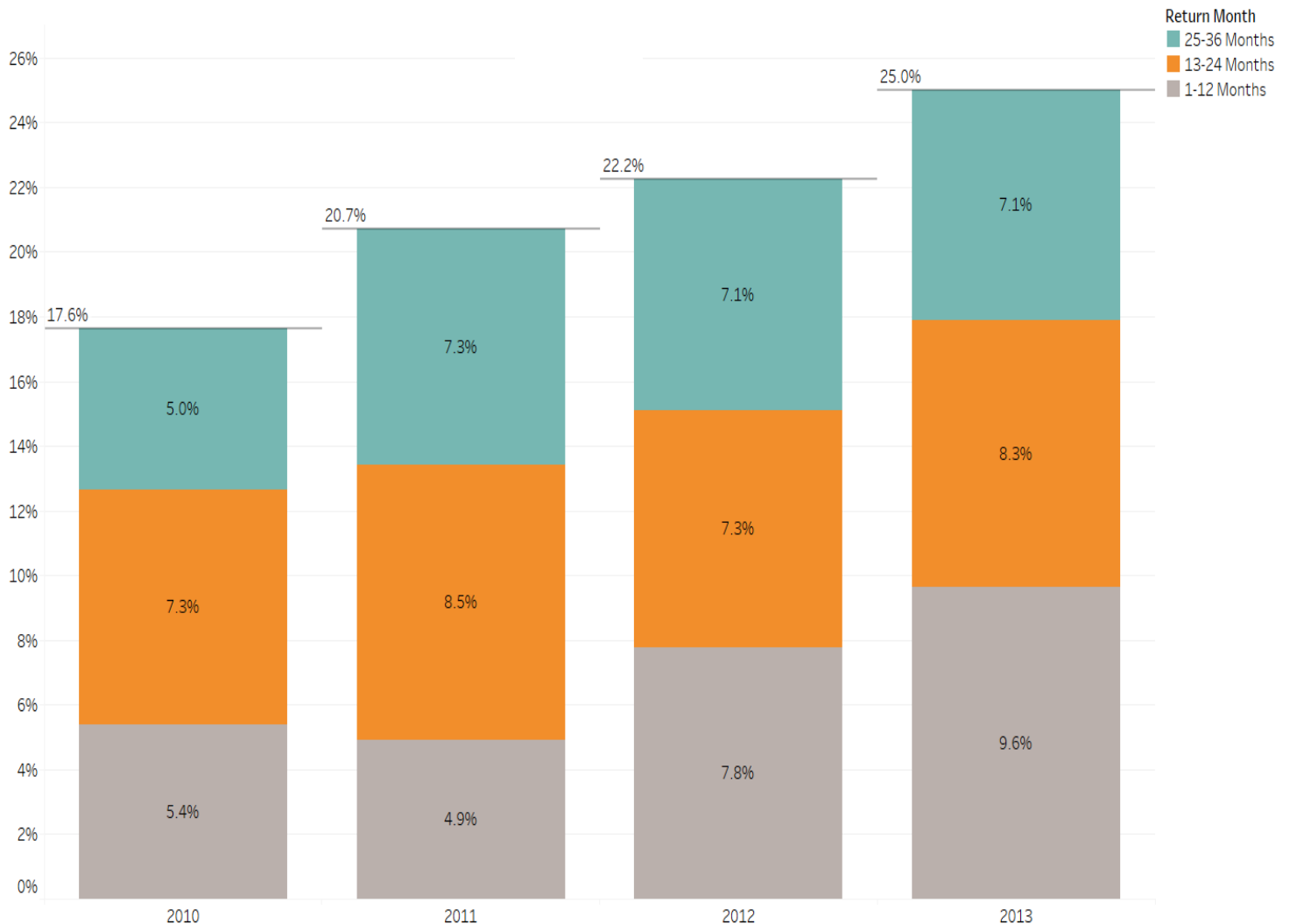
The chart below represents all straight releases from a MDOC facility between 2013 and 2015 grouped by Return Month and Release Year.

MDOC post release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 17.6%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 20.7%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 22.2%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 25%
- Three year RCR Average – 21.4%

The highest rate of return comes in the 13-24 month time period with an average Straight Release RCR of 8%.

The three year RCR increased from 17.6% to 25% from 2010 to 2013.





Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Study

Return to Custody by Gender

The chart below represents all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2013 grouped by Return Month and Gender.

Male MDOC Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 25.7%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 28.8%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 29.4%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 31.5%
- Three year RCR Average – 28.9%

Female MDOC Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 14%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 17.4%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 12.9%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 18.9%
- Three year RCR Average – 15.8%

* Low number of Female releases account for noticeable fluctuations in RCR's over time.





Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Report

Return to Custody by Release Custody Level

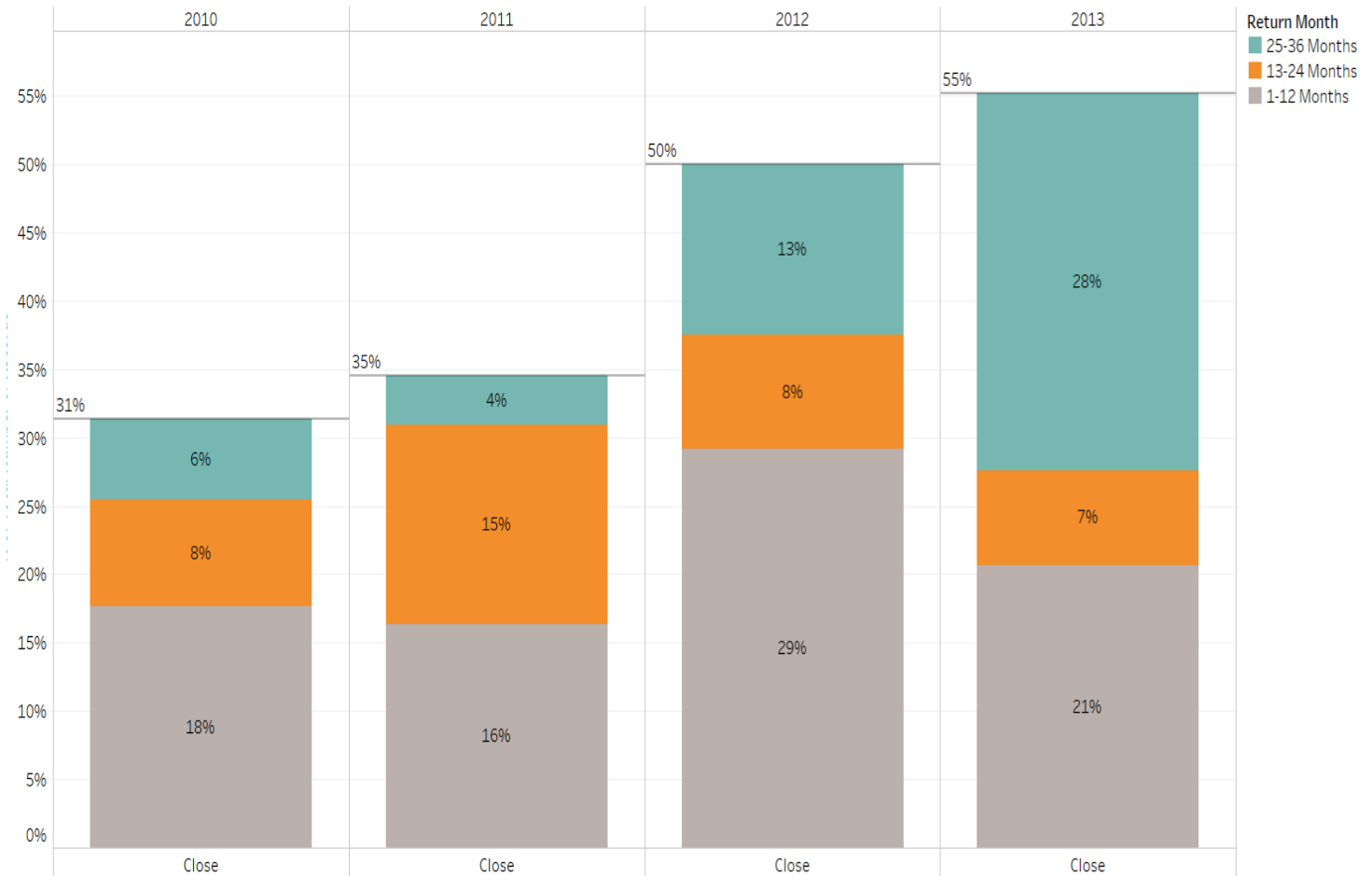
The following charts represent all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2013 grouped by Return Month and Custody Level at Release.

Close Custody Release

Close Custody Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 31%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 35%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 50%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 55%
- Three year RCR Average – 42.8%

* Low number of Close releases account for noticeable fluctuations in RCR's over time.



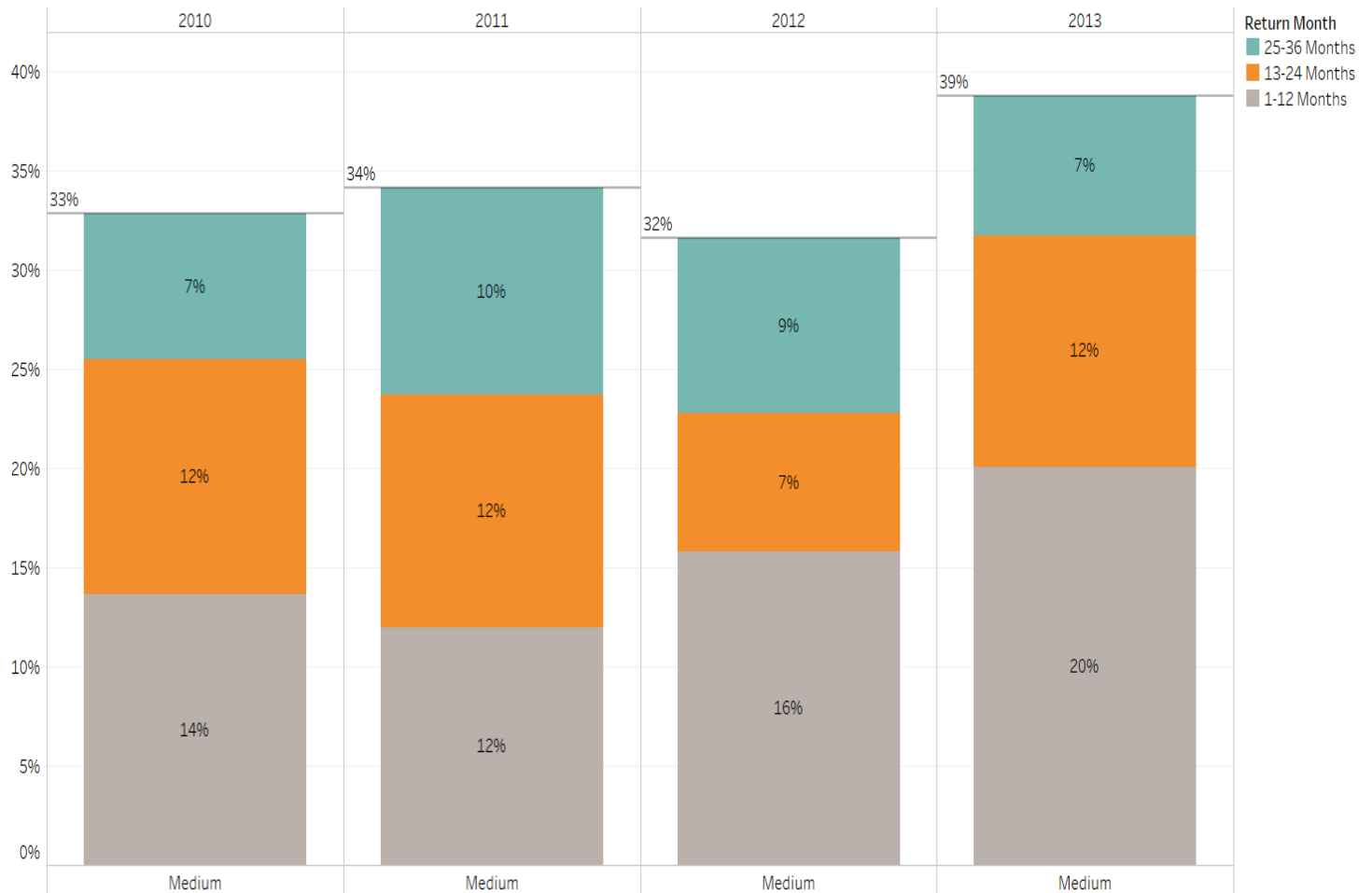


Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Study

Medium Custody Release

Medium Custody Post Release RCR

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 33%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 34%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 32%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 39%
- Three year RCR Average – 34.5%





Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Study

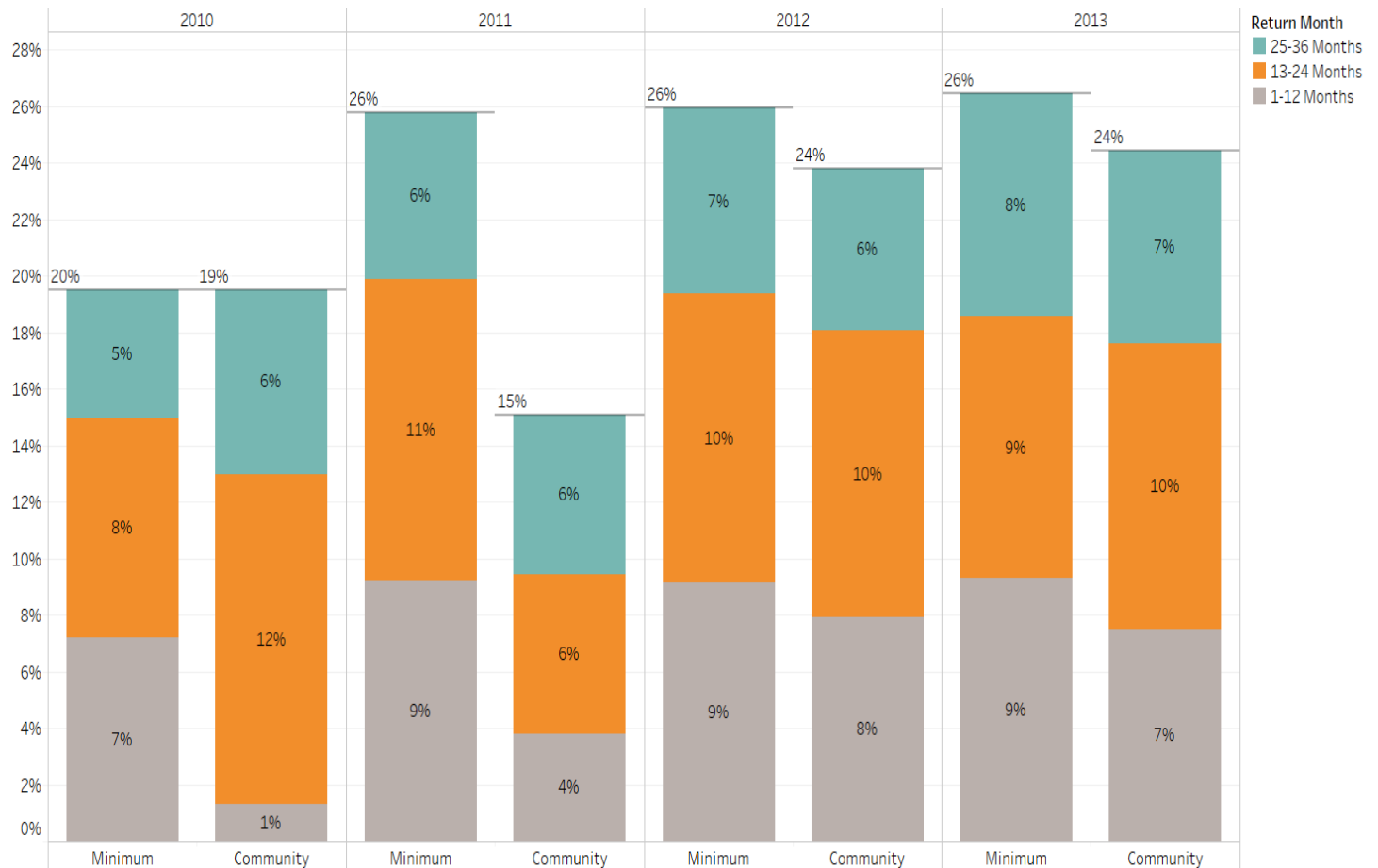
Minimum & Community Custody Release

Minimum Custody Post Release RCR

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 20%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 26%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 26%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 26%
- Three year RCR Average – 24.5%

Community Custody Post Release RCR

- 2010 Release Year – Three year RCR – 19%
- 2011 Release Year – Three year RCR – 15%
- 2012 Release Year – Three year RCR – 24%
- 2013 Release Year – Three year RCR – 24%
- Three year RCR Average – 20.5%



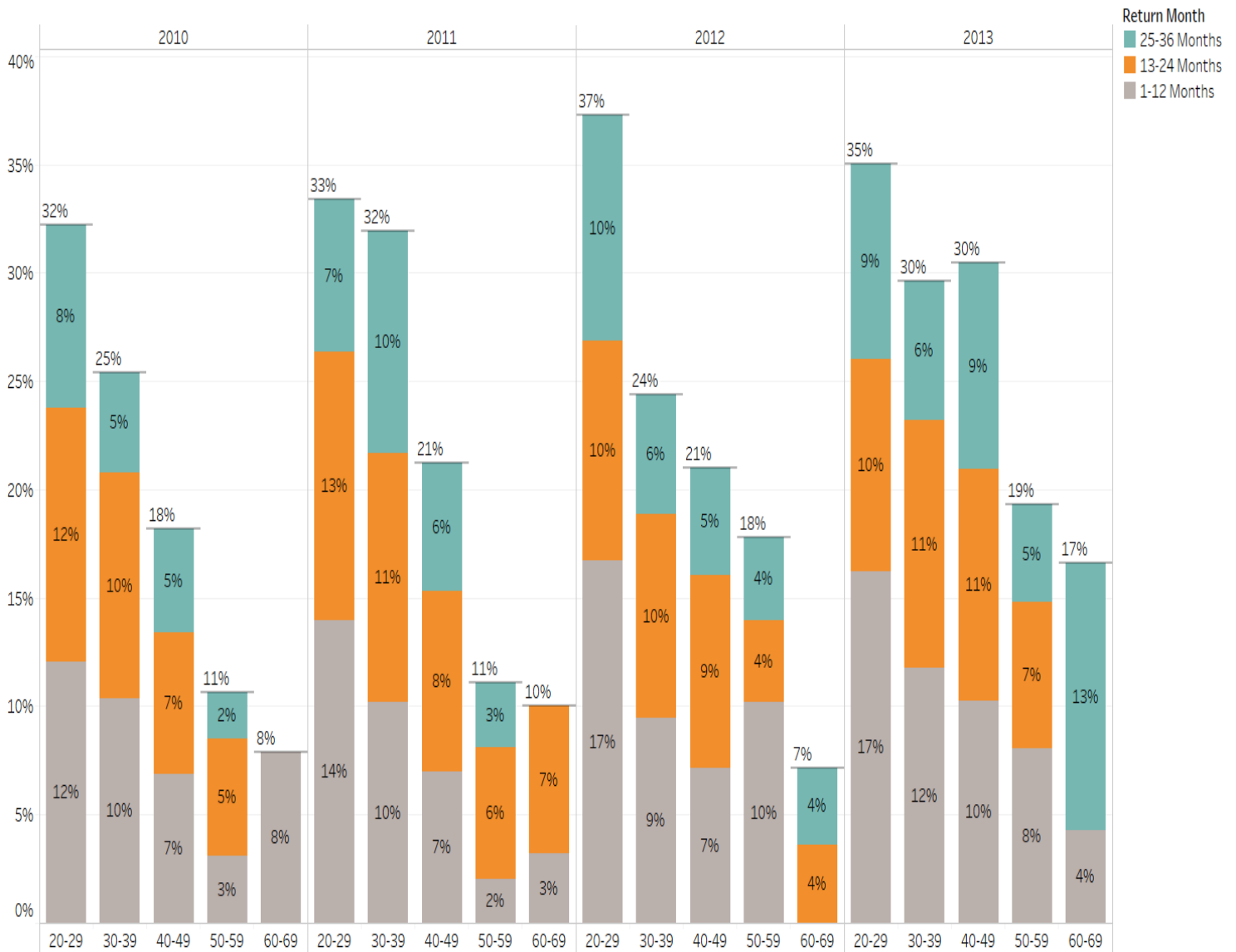


Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Study

Return to Custody by Age at Release

The chart below represents all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2013 grouped by Return Month and Age at Release.

- Inmates released between the ages of 20-29 years have the highest Return to Custody rate over a three-year period.
 - The next highest return to custody age group is 30-39 year olds.
- These same patterns are seen if you look at Male and Female releases individually



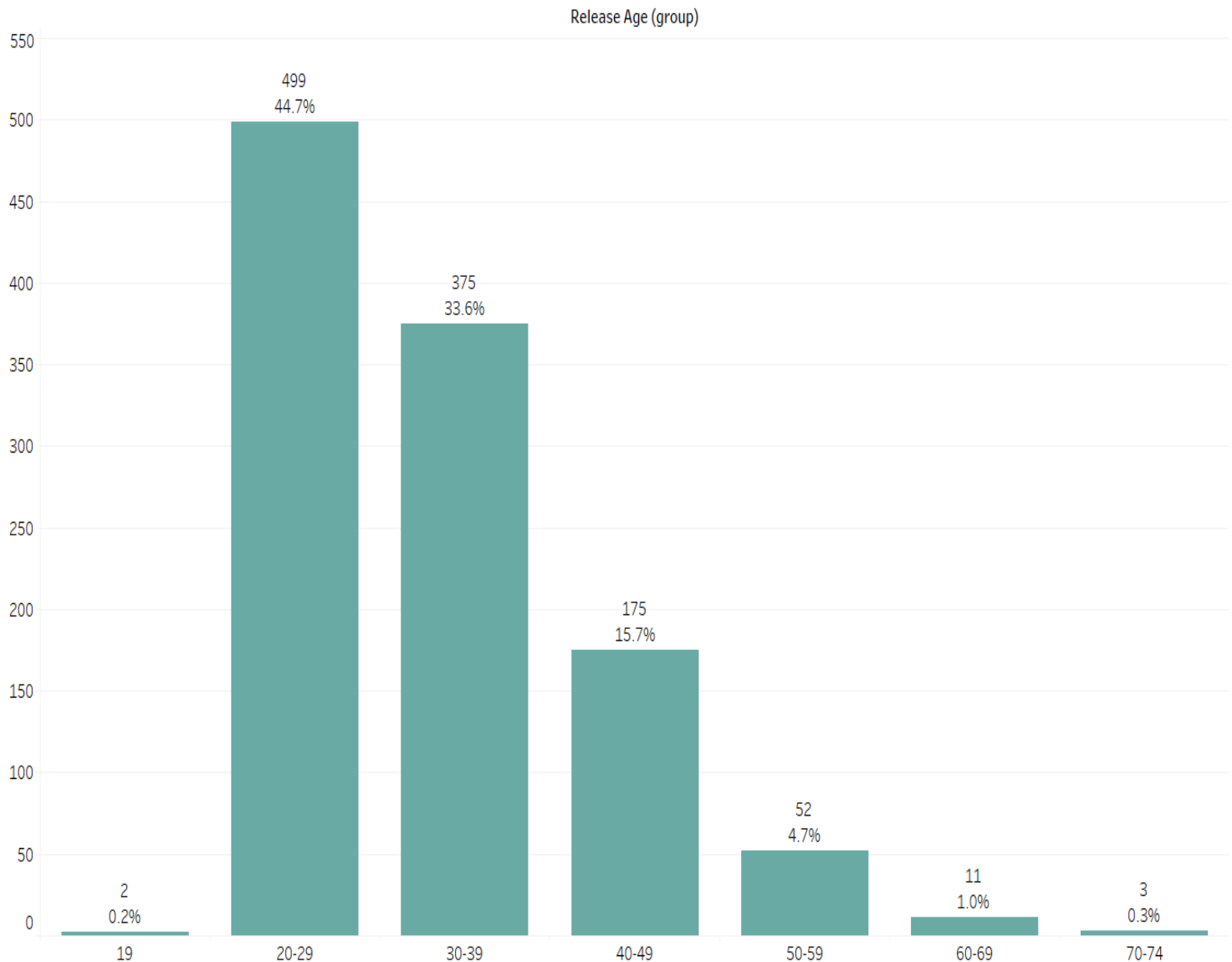


Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Report

Total Returns by Age

The chart below represents all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2013 who returned within 3 years. The data is grouped by the age at time of release with each bar depicting the number of returns and the percentage of the total returns for each release age group.

- Inmates released between the ages of 20-29 years accounted for 44.7%(499 of 1,117) of Returns to Custody.
- Inmates released between the ages of 30-39 have the next highest return totals.





Maine Department of Corrections Return to Custody Report

Conclusion

Defining and measuring Return to Custody has given the MDOC the ability to measure the RCR, establishing baselines to compare future RCR against, thus creating a new performance measurement.

MDOC plans to measure RCR on a monthly basis with the intent to report on progress at the end of every calendar year.

Maine Department of Corrections
25 Tyson Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone (207) 287-2711
Fax (207) 287-4370
<http://www.maine.gov/corrections>



The mission of the Department of Corrections is to reduce the likelihood that juvenile and adult offenders will re-offend, by providing practices, programs and services which are evidence-based and which hold the offenders accountable.
